

LESSON Dewey Decimal and finding the “main idea”	SUBJECT AREA Information Studies, English
CURRICULUM OBJECTIVE(S) To identify the main Dewey categories found in the library collection	
TIMEFRAME 2 x 50 minute period	MATERIALS NEEDED <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Handouts “What’s Here?”• pencils• clipboards
ESSENTIAL SKILLS NEEDED <ul style="list-style-type: none">• knowledge of numerical order• locating title• ability to copy	
INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Depending on the age of your group, you may want to either:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) use any picture book in which there is a mystery to locate something (e.g., Where’s Waldo?)b) play a game to see if the students can locate common sections of your library (e.g., Point or Go to the place where the magazines are; Point or Go to the place where the Clifford books are; etc.)2. Ask students what makes their search easier (possible responses: knowing where to look; knowing what you’re looking for; having been there before)	
OUTLINE OF ACTIVITIES <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Explain to students that today they would be working in groups (2-3) to help find things in the nonfiction section of the library collection.2. Assign each team one of the “What’s Here” handouts and Dewey category. Instruct each team that they will be going to the section with books that only have those numbers on them (you may need to give them examples of what they would or wouldn’t use)/3. At that section, they should write down the titles of any 10 books with the correct number. Make sure that they don’t take 10 titles in a row (encourage them to mix them up a bit).4. When all the titles have been recorded on each sheet, work together as a class (if classes are Grades 2-5) or combining groups (if older) to name the topic each title is about (e.g., “Wayne Gretzky” would be hockey player; “How to draw cars” would be about drawing, etc.)5. Next, the class or group should look to see what all those topics have in common. I usually have the kids visualize a bucket in which all these topics have been placed, and ask them how they would “label the bucket”. That should be the main idea.6. To reinforce the categories, ask the groups to do a visualization of their Dewey category to help them all remember where to find things. You could have the class produce a “Guide to Dewey” that could hang beside your non-fiction collection so they could refer to it when in the library.	
ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION Give students practice with the Dewey system by playing Dewey bingo or matching game.	

